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IN DEFENCE OF MĪMĀṀSĀ

(THE ESSENCE OF HINDUISM)

BY

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[This article was prepared as the latter portion of the Introduction to the volume of the Descriptive Catalogue of the Library, relating to *Mīmāṁsā* and *Advaita Vedānta*. Later it was decided to publish it separately. The Catalogue is more a reference book and the material contained in this article is meant more for general reading. With suitable changes it is now issued independently.]

i. PRELIMINARY

Mīmāṁsā is not a very popular subject in modern times. It had lost its popularity even in ancient times and the subject was mainly kept up in the South of India. Indian religion is now supposed to be identical with the *Vedānta*, especially with the *Advaita Vedānta*. If one carefully reads the *Rāmāyaṇa*, the *Mahābhārata* and the *Purāṇas*, and also the *Kāvyas* and the *Nāṭakas* in Sanskrit, it would be found that in ancient times the *Mīmāṁsā* was a living force in the country. There are three goals in life described in Indian literature. They are *Dharma* or life according to the moral law of the world, *Artha* or aquisition of the material for such a life and *Kāma* or enjoyment in life. There must be balance among the three. There is a fourth, which is known as the supreme goal of life, and that is *Mokṣa* or beatitude, the final liberation

from the bonds of this world. The first three form what is called the *Pravṛttimārga*, the path of active life, and the last is the fruit of *Nivṛttimārga*, the path of dissociation from the activities in life. There is also a view that the ultimate goal of liberation from the bonds of life can be attained through the path of active life itself.

Mīmāṁsā deals with the first of the three goals in the *Pravṛttimārga*, namely, *Dharma*. The literature on this subject is immense and a large number of renowned writers in India have written voluminous works on this subject. This subject has been neglected in modern times to such an extent that it has ceased to count as one of the systems of philosophy in India except as a matter of courtesy or as acceptance of a tradition. Among the six systems, the *Nyāya* and the *Vedānta* have become the popular systems. There is no attempt in the following pages to deal elaborately with the philosophy in the system. The attempt is more to show the importance of the subject in modern life. Recognising the importance which the *Vedānta* has acquired, it is also neccessary for me to show that the *Mīmāṁsā* is not opposed to the *Vedānta*, not even to the *Advaita Vedānta* ; on the other hand it is an integral part of a unitary system of the interpretation of the Vedas, of which the *Mīmāṁsā* and the *Vedānta* are two co-ordinate parts. I do this first.

ii. Harmony between the Mīmāṁsā and the Vedānta

What is known as the Veda consists of the original texts called the *Mantra* or *Saṁhitā* portion and the *Brāhmaṇa* portion which forms a sort of interpretation of the original texts. The *Brāhmaṇas* are divided into three portions : (1)

the main *Brāhmaṇa* portion which interprets the ritualism of the Vedas, (2) the *Āraṇyakas* and (3) the *Upaniṣads* which interpret the philosophy of the Vedas. There is also the *Pūrva Mīmāṁsā* or *Karma Mīmāṁsā* and the *Uttara Mīmāṁsā* or the *S'ārīraka Mīmāṁsā* that interpret respectively the ritualism of the main *Brāhmaṇas* and the philosophy of the *Upaniṣads*. There is the *Saṅkarṣakāṇḍa* which can be equated with the *Āraṇyakas*. The basic text of the *Pūrva Mīmāṁsā* is by Jaimini in twelve chapters; the *Saṅkarṣakāṇḍa*, in four chapters, is also sometimes attributed to Jaimini. The basic text of the *Uttara Mīmāṁsā* is by Bādarāyaṇa, in four chapters.

Just as the main *Brāhmaṇas*, the *Āraṇyakas* and the *Upaniṣads* form a unit, the twenty chapters of the *Pūrva Mīmāṁsā*, the *Saṅkarṣakāṇḍa* and the *Uttara Mīmāṁsā* together can form a single unit, interpreting the Vedas. The affiliation of the *Āraṇyakas* to the main *Brāhmaṇas* or to the *Upaniṣads* is a very doubtful point, and there has been a slight indefiniteness regarding the division of the latter portion into the *Āraṇyaka* and the *Upaniṣad* in the case of the *Aitareya*. I have drawn attention to this point in the Preface to the Edition of the ten *Major Upaniṣads* published from the Adyar Library with the commentary S'rī Upaniṣadbrahma Yogin. From the point of view of authorship, the *Saṅkarṣakāṇḍa* must be affiliated to the *Pūrva Mimāṁsā*, and the *Uttara Mīmāṁsā* is another part. From the point of view of the subject matter, the twenty chapters together form a single unit (*Ekas'āstra*), being the interpretation of the Vedas. There is no unity of authorship for this whole *S'āstra* taken as a unit. The aspects taken up are also different in the three portions. Yet there is no conflict at all among them.

When S'abarasvāmin commented upon the *Pūrva Mīmāṁsā Sūtras* without commenting upon the other portions

and when S'aṅkarācārya commented upon the *Uttara Mīmāṁsā Sūtras* in the same way, there could not have been any intention on their part of splitting a single system into different systems. The *Ācāryas* who came after S'aṅkarācārya also followed the same method, and they too could not have any intention of splitting up the system into different systems. Sāyaṇa has commented upon the entire texts of the *Ṛgveda* and the *Taittirīyaveda*, consisting of the *Saṁhitā*, the *Brāhmaṇa*, the *Āraṇyaka* and the *Upaniṣads*. But he has commented only upon portions of the other Vedas. This does not mean that on his part there was an attempt to split up the other Vedas into distinct parts, while he held the *Ṛk* and the *Yajus* as single units. Similarly the commentators of the *Pūrva* and the *Uttara Mīmāṁsās* simply took up different aspects of this unitary system for commenting and had no intention of drawing a clear cut distinction between the portions as forming separate systems.

S'aṅkarācārya is supposed to have not only drawn a distinction between the *Pūrva Mīmāṁsā* and the *Uttara Mīmāṁsā*, but also to have introduced an element of conflict between them. But in the *Bhāṣya* of S'aṅkarācārya itself there is nothing to warrant an assumption that he considered the *Vedānta* or *Uttara Mīmāṁsā* as opposed to *Mīmāṁsā* (the *Pūrva Mīmāṁsā*). He took the entire Veda as a unit, and this is quite clear in his interpretation of the 3rd *Sūtra*. In the explanation of the 1st *Sūtra* too, where there is supposed to be the conflict presented, he definitely says that the study of the Veda, which must be the entire Veda, is a necessary preliminary qualification for the investigation into the nature of *Brahman*.[1] *Svādhyāya* has in all contexts meant the entire

[1] स्वाध्यायानन्तर्यं तु समानम् ।

p. 65. *The Bhāmatī, Catussūtrī*, T. P. H., Adyar.

Veda and not the *Upaniṣads* alone. All that he says is that his attempt is to interpret the *Upaniṣadic* doctrines and that this can be undertaken even without the preliminary qualification of an investigation into the nature of *Dharma*. But it can be undertaken after such an investigation into the nature of *Dharma* as well.[1] He was awake to the environments, and he had to take his stand in conformity with the spirit of the times. It must also be taken note of in this connection that what he was opposing in the commentary on the 1st *Sūtra* is not the standpoint of the *Mīmāṁsā* but only that of another School of the *Vedānta* itself.

The Vedic rituals had lost their hold on the people. The Vedic rituals became confined to a few families and had ceased to be a national institution. It was the temple worship that became the national religious institution. Even the various *Saṁskāras* (Sacraments) like *Upanayana* (initiation into the study of the Vedas) had been completely given up by an influential section of the people. The monastries had become very popular and investigation into the nature of the Ultimate Truth of the Universe was being undertaken by wise men who had retired to such monastries and who had given up their Vedic rituals, or who did not even take up such rituals at any time. All that S'aṅkarācārya says is that even such people have a right to investigate into the nature of the Ultimate Truth. What he did was really to bring together on the same platform people who followed the ancient Vedic rituals and also those who had given up such rituals. What he really established was the harmony of interest between the ritualists and the monks who had given up such rituals, in the matter of the investigation into the nature of the Absolute

[1] प्रागपि धर्मजिज्ञासाया: ऊर्ध्वं च शक्यते ब्रह्म जिज्ञासितुं ज्ञातुं च ।

p. 94, *The Bhāmatī, Catussūtrī.*

Truth; he denounced the conflict between the two sets of people.

He never made a bugle call to the people at large to leave off the fold of Vedic ritualism, nor did he refuse to discuss with those who followed the path of Vedic Ritualism, matters relating to the nature of the Absolute Truth. On the other hand he definitely says that his teaching is for the few who are dissatisfied with their experience of the world and who seek satisfaction in finding out the Truth about the Universe. It is only an intellectual dissatisfaction, an intuitional dissatisfaction. And it is only the very few that can have a dissatisfaction with their experience of the world. He was prepared to discuss also with those who follow the Path of Vedic Ritualism and who desire to continue in that Path, provided there is this dissatisfaction, at least the possibility of such a dissatisfaction at a later stage, and a readiness too to accept the position that has been established after their discussion. To the ordinary man what is experienced is what is true, and the question of what is eternal and what is only transient has neither a value nor an interest. Activities bring their fruits and they are satisfied. They have their passions and they are content to remain in such a world. They do not know that there is anything like an escape from this world. His teaching is for those few who get out of this normal, who have what he terms the four-fold eligibility[1] to find out the Truth through ratiocination. The four-fold eligibility consists in (1) a recognition of a distinction between what is eternal and what is only transient,[2] (2) in a detachment from the enjoyment of the fruits of their activities here or hereafter,[3]

[1] साधनचतुष्टय, p. 94, *The Bhāmatī*, *Catussūtrī*, T. P. H.

[2] नित्यानित्यवस्तुविवेक, *Ibid.*

[3] इहामुत्रार्थभोगविराग, *Ibid.*

(3) in the development of self-control, internal calm etc.[1] and (4) in a desire for release from dissatisfaction.[2] There can be no conflict between conduct prescribed for the normal man and introspection prescribed for the super-normal few.

S'aṅkarācārya accepted the *Vedānta Sūtras* as the interpretation of the *Upaniṣadic* texts. Thus he took up the basic texts also, namely, the *Upaniṣads*, for interpretation, to show that there is unity between his interpretation of the *Sūtras* and the spririt of the *Upaniṣads*. He recognised that the *Upaniṣads* formed only the final portions of the unitary Vedas and that they are preceded by portions relating to ritualism. The entire Veda formed a unit; and if there is conflict between ritualism and philosophy there would be internal contradiction within the Vedas, a position which S'aṅkarācārya would never accept and which he would never initiate. Thus harmony and non-contradiction between ritualism and philosophy must be accepted as a cardinal point in S'aṅkarācārya's approach to the interpretation of the Vedic texts, and thus also in his approach to the interpretation of the *Uttara Mīmāṁsā Sūtras*. He recognised only various phases, and he took up a certain phase for interpretation.

In the *Vedānta*, the *Bhagavad Gītā* is also taken as a basic text, besides the *Sūtras* and the *Upaniṣads*, forming a trio as the foundation. It is in the 13th chapter of the *Bhagavad Gītā* that the nature of the self and of the external world is taken up. The chapter is called "the distinction (*vibhāga*) between the world (*kṣetra*) and the self (*kṣetrajña*—the knower of the *kṣetra*). In that context there is the statement that the nature of the self and of the world has been dealt with in the *Brahma Sūtras* (the *Uttara Mīmāṁsā*

[1] शमदमादिसाधनसंपत्, *Ibid*. [2] मुमुक्षुत्व, *Ibid*.

Sūtras).[1] So he has shown that the nature of the self and of the world as described in the 13th chapter of the *Bhagavad Gītā* is identical with the interpretation of the nature of *Brahman* which he has given in his commentary on the *Vedānta Sūtras* and on the *Upaniṣads*. He has also shown that this interpretation of the nature of the self and of the world can fit into the whole of the *Bhagavad Gītā*. While the *Brahma Sūtras* and the *Upaniṣads* primarily relate to a consideration of the nature of *Brahman*, he could not have failed to realise that the description of the nature of self and of the world is not the primary purport and intention of the *Bhagavad Gītā*. He also could not have failed to realise that the *Bhagavad Gītā* is not a text meant for the monastries, like the *Brahma Sūtras* and the *Upaniṣads*.

The Scope of the Bhagavad Gītā

The *Bhagavad Gītā* is essentially a work relating to the conduct of man in his normal life. S'rī Kṛṣṇa gave the teaching to Arjuna in a particular context. The effect of the teaching was that Arjuna fought the war and won the war. Active life is again and again affirmed in the *Bhagavad Gītā* :

> He who with control over the senses starts on actions with his instruments of action, excels (III-7).
>
> You must do actions that were done by your forefathers. (III. 15)
>
> As between renunciation and adoption of action, adoption of action is preferable. (V. 5).
>
> You ought to do your work here. (XVI-24).

The *Bhagavad Gītā* draws a distinction between *Saṁnyāsa* and *Tyāga* (both mean giving up), in the statements :

[1] ऋषिभिर्बहुधा गीतं छन्दोभिर्विविधैः पृथक् ।
ब्रह्मसूत्रपदैश्चैव हेतुमद्भिर्विनिश्चितैः ॥ *Bhagavadgītā*, XIII-4.

Giving up of such actions for which a fruit is prescribed is *Saṁnyāsa* and the giving up of the fruits of all actions is *Tyāga*. (XVIII-2).

Then it is said :

Sacrifice (*Yajña*), Gift (*Dāna*) and Penance (*Tapas*) shall not be given up. (XVIII-5).

The best kind of *Tyāga* is when there is no attachment and when there is no desire for fruit, and at the same time when all actions are done as what is one's duty to do. (XVIII-9).

The *Bhagavad Gītā* definitely denounces physical mortifications :

There is no *Yoga* for one who over-eats nor for one who does not eat at all. Nor is there *Yoga* for one who sleeps too much nor for one who does not sleep at all. (VI-16).

It is not only actions in general that the *Bhagavad Gītā* prescribes and recommends ; even the rituals prescribed by scripture are praised :

The Lord created the beings along with sacrifice and said : " May you continue the race with this ; may this be for the fulfilment of your needs ; may you propitiate the gods with this and may gods propitiate you ; and both propitiating each other in this way, may you attain to the highest happiness." (III-10, 11).

Those who eat the remains of sacrifice reach the eternal *Brahman*. This world is not for him who does not perform sacrifice, and how can the other be for him ? (IV-31).

S'rī Kṛṣṇa says that he lives a life of activity as a model for man :

Even considering the welfare of the world you must remain in activity. Whatever the great do, the lesser follow. For me there remains nothing that should be done or that should be achieved, and yet I remain in activity. If I do not remain in activity, people would follow me and there would be ruin in this world. I will be the cause of confusion. (III-20-24).

One shall not create confusion in the minds of the ignorant who are attached to activity. (III-26).

The above are the points that I have selected at random to show that the *Bhagavad Gītā* is not a book meant for the

monks in the monastries, prescribing renunciation and search for happiness in another state. I have not given a literal translation of the passages. I have only given the points that are meant in the passages. No one can miss or ignore such statements in the *Bhagavad Gītā*, least of all S'aṅkarācārya.

I have not been able to find a single statement in the whole of the *Bhagavad Gītā* where *Saṁnyāsa* is recommended. On the other hand there is definite denunciation of it in some places:

A *Saṁnyāsin* is he who performs what is one's duty to do without attachement to the fruits, and not one who has given up his rituals and his activities. (VI-1).

The *Saṁnyāsa* of actions prescribed as one's duty is not acceptable, (XVIII-7).

By *Saṁnyāsa* alone one does not reach attainment. (III-4).

He who sits controlling his organs of action and thinking of the objects of such organs with his mind is called a hypocrat. (III-6).

Nothing can be a stronger condemnation of the external form of *Saṁnyāsa*, the bare ceremonial of *Saṁnyāsa*.

Then how could S'aṅkarācārya adopt such a text for interpreting his philosophy? Why did he select it? Just as the Vedas contain both the *Karma* portion and the *Jñāna* portion, so in the *Bhagavad Gītā* too there is an element of *Jñāna*, which latter fits into his scheme and which is not inconsistent with the rest of the *Bhagavad Gītā*. Even in a life of intense activity, which it is that is primarily prescribed in the *Bhagavad Gītā*, "understanding" is maintained as an essential factor. The understanding of the self and of the world described in the 13th chapter is identical with what he has in his own philosophy. As a matter of fact the eminent position of the factor of understanding in human life is found in the whole of the Vedas, both in the *Saṁhitā* and in the *Brāhmaṇa* portions. Similar is the case with the *Bhagavad*

Gītā. Statements like the Supreme (*para*) and the Highest Goal (*parā gati*) frequently found in the *Bhagavad Gītā* also are in harmony with his philosophy. It is this harmony of knowledge with action that is at the root of the acceptance of the *Bhagavad Gītā* also by S'aṅkarācārya.

There is difference; but difference is not always conflict. Various *S'āstras* prescribe various things, which may be different from what is given in the other *S'āstras.* But that does not amount to one being in opposition to the other. The medical science has been accepted as a part of the *Dharma S'āstra;* but there are various prescriptions in the medical science that go against the requirements of the *Dharma S'āstra.* Not only has the medical science been accepted as part of the *Dharma S'āstra,* it is also a Veda (*Āyurveda*). Medical science deals with remedies for physical ailments; *Dharma S'āstra* deals with human conduct. They have their respective subject matter, and also their respective fields. It is not said that observances of the prescriptions in the medical science leads one to *Svarga* (heaven), which it is that the prescriptions in the *Dharma S'āstra* ultimately promise.

Similarly, there is the *Rājanīti* (Political Science) which also contains prescriptions that go against the requirements of the *Dharma S'āstra.* Kālidāsa has dubbed *Rājanīti* as treachery glorified as a great science.[1] The *Kāma S'āstra* contains descriptions of various actions that are against the elements of morals, that are even repulsive from the point of view of social decency and objectionable from the point of view of hygiene and health. The methods of cooking dog's flesh may be described in the treatise on cookery, which does not mean that it is prescribed as a decent food. In this way, sciences are only sciences. Each science has its own field and deals

[1] परातिसन्धानमधीयते यैर्विद्येति ते सन्तु किलाप्तवाचः । *S'ākuntala,* V.25.

with such subjects fully. There is only a difference between the sciences and there is no conflict. If any one wishes such and such a fruit, the method of doing the necessary action is such and such : this is all that is found in a science. If it is a question of *Dharma*, this is the method ; if it is *Brahman* knowledge, this is the method. The methods are different. But they have their places in the world and they can find an appropriate place in this unified world. This is what I understand as the position of S'aṅkarācārya.

The *Mīmāṁsā* and the *Vedānta* form a single *S'āstra* in so far as both of them interpret the Vedas. The basic texts of the *Sāṅkhya* and the *Yoga* systems do not say that they propose to interpret the Vedas. As a matter of fact, everything that is in the *Sāṅkhya*, the 25 categories,[1] comes within the sphere of perception and reason. It is not in the tradition of the two systems that they are the interpretations of the Vedas. The same is the case with the *Nyāya-Vais'eṣika* system. It is true that the *Vais'eṣika Sūtras* start with the statement that it is an interpretation of *Dharma*,[2] which is defined in the next *Sūtra* as what leads to elevation and beatitude.[3] But in these two systems too, all the points that are dealt with come within the sphere of perception and inference. *Upamāna* too may be necessary sometimes. In this way the twenty five categories of the *Sāṅkhya*, the method of stopping the modifications of the internal organs[4] according to the *Yoga* system, the sixteen categories of the *Nyāya*[5] system

[1] Buddhi, Ahaṅkāra, Manas, five senses of knowing and five means of action, five Tanmātras, five Bhūtas, Prakṛti and Puruṣa.

[2] अथातो धर्मं व्याख्यास्यामः । *Vais'es'ikasūtra*, 1-1-1.

[3] यतोऽभ्युदयनिःश्रेयससिद्धिः स धर्मः, *Ibid.*, 1-1-2. [4] चित्तवृत्तिनिरोध.

[5] प्रमाणप्रमेयसंशयप्रयोजनदृष्टान्तसिद्धान्तावयवतर्कनिर्णयवादजल्पवितण्डाहेत्वाभास-च्छलजातिनिग्रहस्थानानां तत्वज्ञानान्निःश्रेयसाधिगमः । *Nyāyasūtra*, 1-1.

and the six categories of the *Vais'eṣika* system[1] come within the sphere of perception and inference, and there is no need for the Veda to be introduced as a means for knowing anything that is brought into these systems. Veda is accepted as a means of knowing, only as a matter of loyalty and environmental obligation and not as a matter of necessity. Neither the basic texts nor the later traditions of the systems adopt the Veda as the sole means for knowing anything coming within the systems.

The position is entirely different in the case of the *Mīmāṁsā* and the *Vedānta*. The entire subject matter of the two systems depend on the Vedas for its understanding. And it is very explicitly stated in the basic texts of the two systems. The commentators too make the point quite clear. The tradition of the two systems is also the same. *Dharma* is the subject matter of the *Mīmāṁsā* and *Brahman* is the subject matter of the *Vedānta*. What is dealt with in the *Mīmāṁsā* is that aspect of *Dharma* that can be known only from the Vedas.[2] There are various acts of social service and various aspects of civic life that are known to be *Dharma* from experience. They may come under the term *Pūrta*, as distinct from *Iṣṭa* (*Yāgas* = Sacrifices) that form the subject matter of *Mīmāṁsā*. Such aspects of *Dharma* do not come within the scope of *Mīmāṁsā*. In the *Vedānta*, the 3rd *Sūtra*[3] says that the Veda is the source for the knowledge of *Brahman*. But really *Brahman* is not the object of any means of knowledge, according to S'aṅkarācārya. In his view, no means of knowledge so called, is ultimately valid. But

[1] द्रव्यगुणकर्मसामान्यविशेषसमवायाः *Vais'eṣikasūtra*, 1-1-3.

[2] चोदनालक्षणोऽर्थो धर्मः । *Pūrvamīmāṁsasūtra*, 1-1-2.

[3] शास्त्रयोनित्वात् । *Brahmasūtra*, 1-1-3.

inference leads us to the stage of the world being *Mithyā*; it is the Vedas that turn our attention to the *Brahman* as the Ultimate Reality. If there is no Veda to guide us, we can as well accept the position of the *Mādhyamikas* that since the objects of experience are *Mithyā*, their experience too is *Mithyā* along with the experiencer, and that only the absolute void remains as the Truth. S'abarasvāmin says that the *Mīmāṁsā Sūtras* interpret the Vedas[1]; so does S'aṅkarācārya too with reference to the *Vedānta Sūtras.*[2] As interpretations of the Vedas, both the *Mīmāṁsā* and the *Vedānta* form a unitary *S'āstra.* And this is fully accepted by S'aṅkarācārya also. These two systems stand out as distinct from other *S'āstras* as the *S'āstras* for Law and for Truth, entirely dependent on the Vedas.

When people speak of the opposition of S'aṅkarācārya to ritualism, there is one important point which they do not keep in mind. In a way, S'aṅkarācārya himself is a ritualist. The new wave of thought in the country affected only the Vedic rituals and not ritualism as an aspect of religious life. After all, ritualism is the form of religious worship and is an integral part of every religion, and religion did not die out in the country. Whether it is the worship of divinities through offerings in the fire, which is the central point in the Vedic ritualism, or whether it is the worship of the divinities in a temple, there is ritualism in both. No one will dare to contend that S'aṅkarācārya was opposed to the worship of divinities in temples. The *Yoga Sūtras* declare the worship of divinities as one of the *Kriyā-Yogas.*[3] The *Saṁnyāsi-Mutts*

[1] वेदवाक्यान्येवैभिर्व्याख्यायन्ते । *S'ābarabhāṣya*, 1-1-1.

[2] वेदान्तवाक्यकुसुमग्रथनार्थत्वात् सूत्राणाम् । *Bhāmatī Catussūtrī*, T. P. H. p. 127.

[3] तपःस्वाध्यायेश्वरप्रणिधानानि क्रियायोगाः । *Yogasūtra*, 2-1.

(monastries) belonging to all the persuasions in India are attached to temples or have temples attached to them. All the *Saṁnyāsins* engage themselves in this form of worship of divinities. Not only this, they retain some of the rituals of the Vedas also associated with their routines in daily life. They perform some kind of morning, evening and noon ablutions. During food also, they perform some sort of purificatory ritual, what every *Twice-born* Hindu does in India (sprinkling of water around and over the food, sipping water and eating the first few morsels of food in a ceremonial way).

It must also be remembered in this connection that the followers of S'aṅkarācārya are not all of them anti-rituals, Saṁnyāsins who have given up all religious rituals. On the other hand they are also house-holders who perform the rituals prescribed in the Vedic Path. S'aṅkarācārya did not at all found an anti-ritualstic School; he started only a certain mode of approach to the realisation of the Ultimate Truth; he founded a School of *Vedānta*. Although his teaching is primarily meant for the few in the monastries, yet, as a Teacher he has made a wider appeal; and his followers in the School of thought do count when we have to assess his place in Indian thought; we shall not limit our range to the few monks in the monastries in such an assessment. The founder and leader of a School in which the majority of the members are followers of the Path of ritualism, cannot be considered as an opponent of ritualism. The great followers of S'aṅkarācārya have written very authoritative works in the *Vedānta* and also in the *Mīmāṁsā* systems; how can we say that they and their leader are against *Mīmāṁsā*? Can we say either that such writers were merely intellectual automatons and text-book writers with no definite views and settled convictions of their own or that they were intellectually

dishonest, expounding doctrines in which they had no belief? In the whole of Indian literature there is no evidence to show a conflict between *Mīmāṁsā* and *Vedānta*. They are both interpretations of the unitary Veda, each taking up a particular aspect of the Veda.

S'aṅkarācārya's Doctrine of Illusionism

It cannot also be held that the doctrine of illusionism of the world advocated by S'aṅkarācārya and the uncompromising realism of the *Mīmāṁsā* cannot be harmonised, that they are opposed to each other. There is a general belief that according to S'aṅkarācārya, the world is an illusion and that *Brahman* alone is real. *Brahma Satyam-Jagan Mithyā* (*Brahman* is Truth; the world is an illusion); this is a well-known statement. But what does it actually amount to? Apparently it suggests a duality, the world and *Brahman*, of which one is an illusion and the other is real. This is completely opposed to the fundamentals of the doctrine propounded by S'aṅkarācārya. The real point in S'aṅkarācārya's philosophy is the absolute identity of the world with *Brahman*. The doctrine is not that there is a world which is an illusion and which we must discard and that we must accept the other factor, namely, *Brahman*, which alone is real. With a full recognition of the limitation of the language, I may say that what the passage can mean is that *Brahman* experienced by *Brahman* as *Brahman* is experienced as real, while *Brahman* experienced by the self as the world is *Mithyā*. *Brahman* experiencing *Brahman* as the world is the self. It is the experience of *Brahman* as differentiated world that is *Mithyā*; what is real is the experience of the world as *Brahman*, which the world really is.

S'aṅkarācārya lived in a certain age; there was a language known to him and to the people of that age. There were certain terms which people of that age understood in a particular way. There was also prevalent a certain kind of notion about the nature of the world. We cannot expect him to use terms that are current in modern times, in this present age of science, just as a modern scientist using terms that might have been current in an age dominated by theology will not be listened to in modern age. When we consider S'aṅkarācārya's approach to the problem of the nature of man and the universe, we must keep this language factor in mind.

In the Veda we find very little of a pessimistic touch. It is the "good" in the world that is prominent in the Vedas. The world is good and the gods are the friends, companions and guides of men. Sin consists in refusing to propitiate the gods who help and guide men; and it is a sin mainly to this extent. It is not the evil effects of the sin that make it sin. In course of time another view of the nature of the world became prominent in the thoughts of men in India. The world in itself is a sin and man can be happy only by withdrawing from such a world and finally escaping from that world. This is rather the religious aspect of stating a principle; the corresponding philosophical aspect will be that the world consisting of the experience, the experiencer and the experienced, is not what the truth is. This world of such a nature is *Māyā* (illusion). The "good" in religion is the "truth" in philosophy, and the "evil" in religion is the "untruth" in philosophy. Through the elimination of "evil" there remains the "good". Similarly when "untruth" is eliminated, "truth" remains. Untruth consists in experiencing in another way what really is in its own way. When we have the experience of a "cow" it is really the

experience of what is not other things. We never have an experience of a thing simply as that thing; we experience a thing as what is also different from other things. The difference from other things is the truth and our experience of it as a particular thing is only an appearance. The result is that the aggregate of experiences will amount to the aggregate of differences from all other things, which is the same as a complete negation with no positive element. This is the true nature of the universe, which is experienced as an assemblage of differents, that is, positive things having differences from one another. When ultimately all the differents are reduced to differences, whose aggregate is identical with a uniform "void", the experience of such differents too vanishes from the region of reality; and what remains as the reality is only the "void". This in brief was the notion current at that time, about the nature of the universe.

In modern times the evolution theory has taken hold of man's thoughts and beliefs to such an extent that everything is interpreted in terms of the theory of evolution. Similarly, the unreal nature of the world of experience was what had to be taken as an axiom in those days when S'aṅkarācārya lived and worked. The only thing which philosophers could do was to so interpret the nature of the universe as would fit into this belief. It was as futile in those days to build up a philosophy on the basis of the absolute reality of the world of experience as it would be in modern times to build up a philosophy about the nature of the universe based upon God's creation of the universe, denying evolution.

If the world of experience is unreal because of differences in it, what is it that should follow? Is it (1) that the experience of differents and the experiencer and the experienced are all unreal and that what remains as real is only a "void"

(*S'ūnya*), or is it (2) that the differents with the differences that are experienced and their experience are unreal while the experiencer (free from these unrealities) is the real? In other words, did the differents with the experience and the experiencer of the differents come out as an illusion from "difference" which is nothing but a "void", or did the differents with their differences and their experience come out as an illusion from the experiencer? As between the two, a positive and a negative, did the positive arise as an illusory transformation of the negative or did the negative arise as an illusory transformation of the positive? The world that is experienced is an illusory transformation. Of which is it such an illusory transformation? This is the only question.

If there is to be any mutual accommodation between modern scientific thought and the ancient thought of S'aṅkarācārya and the *Mādhyamikas*, the position taken up by S'aṅkarācārya is nearer to the modern approach, namely, that the ultimate basis of the universe is positive in nature, that it is an undifferentiated, monistic and positive reality from which the differences (and consequently negations) arose, than the position taken up by the *Mādhyamikas*, according to which the positive world came out of a negative basis. Modern thought may not accept that what is evolved is illusory in nature. But the difficulty lies in the term "illusory" and not in the doctrines of S'aṅkarācārya. All that S'aṅkarācārya says is that the differents are *Mithyā*, that is, not capable of being defined either as absolutely real or as absolutely unreal. S'aṅkarācārya's conception of what is Absolute contributes much to this difficulty; what is not in any way related to a negation is what he calls the Absolute and everything that is experienced in life is in some way or other related to a negation, it may be in time or space or identity, as not now,

not here or not this. But since they are experienced, they are not absolutely unreal too. The impossibility of defining the differentiated objects of the world of experience either as real or as unreal is not much different from some of the latest theories regarding the nature of the world; and such a view of the world is not unknown to European thought in recent times. Modern scientists may not accept that the positive, undifferentiated monistic reality that is at the root and that is the basis of the differentiated world of experience is *Brahman*. But no one is very particular about the terms, the designation of the basic reality of the world.

Māyāvāda (the doctrine of illusionism of the experienced world) is not the original contribution of S'aṅkarācārya; it is a heritage from the *Mādhyamika* philosophy. What S'aṅkarācārya has contributed is the new turn that he gave to the doctrine of illusionism. Thus according to him the world of experience has an empirical reality only, from the point of view of the Absolute. Every phenomenon in this empirical reality is ultimately the whole of the undifferentiated, monistic reality which is the basis of the empirical appearance. If the world is real, then it is all right; there is realism as in the *Mīmāṁsā* doctrine or the *Dvaita* doctrine in *Vēdanta*. But it is only empirically real, and each item in this phenomenal world is identical with the whole of the Absolute Reality, which is the basis of this phenomenal world. This is S'aṅkarācārya's position. This is not illusionism. It is a re-conversion of the *Mādhyamika* illusionism into a super-realism. His contribution to Indian thought is the establishment of harmony between the absolute realism of the *Mīmāṁsā* and the current line of thought of his times. What is there in *Mīmāṁsā* which S'aṅkarācārya cannot accept? Where is the conflict between *Mīmāṁsā* metaphysics and S'aṅkarācārya's metaphysics?

I am not unaware of the fact that S'aṅkarācārya lays special emphasis on the doctrine of *Māyā* in his system as an integral part. The position that I take is that his contribution does not consist in the introduction of this theory of *Māyā*, nor even the theory of the identity of the phenomenal world with the highest reality. There was Gauḍapāda, who is supposed to be the teacher of S'aṅkarācārya's teacher. He had already propounded the theory of *Māyā* in his *Kārikās* added to the *Māṇḍūkyopaniṣad*, which S'aṅkarācārya has commented upon along with the *Upaniṣad*. Bhartṛhari knew the theory of *Brahman*.[1] Maṇḍana Mis'ra has also contributed his literature regarding the *Brahman* as the Ultimate Reality. Bhartṛhari is not later than S'aṅkarācārya; nor is Maṇḍana mis'ra much later than him. We do not know whether Maṇḍana Mis'ra followed S'aṅkarācārya's teachings or whether he had the doctrine from a prior period of development of the theory of *Brahman*, which S'aṅkarācārya too has propounded. I am not interested in the relative chronology of Bhartṛhari and Maṇḍana Mis'ra on one side and S'aṅkarācārya on the other side. Here my main point is that what goes to the credit of S'aṅkarācārya in the development of the *Advaita Vedānta* system is the complete interpretation of the *Brahma Sūtras* and the *Upaniṣads* according to this system, thus giving a definite shape and form and also a stable support in original texts, to this system. It is in this sense that S'aṅkarācārya is the founder of the *Advaita Vedānta* system. In this formulation what he has done is to turn the *Māyāvāda* of the times into a realistic and positive mould, thus establishing the harmony of *Mīmāṁsā* and the *Vedānta*. In the *Kārikās* of Gauḍapāda and in the works of Maṇḍana Mis'ra, we see a dominance

[1] अनादिनिधनं ब्रह्म शब्दतत्वं यदक्षरम् ।
विवर्ततेऽर्थभावेन प्रक्रिया जगतो यतः ॥ *Vākyapadīya*, I-1.

of the negative aspect. It is on account of the emphasis on the positive basis of this so-called illusory world that S'aṅkarācārya became so very important, besides his having built up his philosophy on the basic texts of the *Sūtras* and the *Upaniṣads*.

iii. Mīmāṁsā in Indian Thought

Philosophy deals with man and the world, their mutual relation and their relation to the Absolute in this universe, if there is such an Absolute. In different systems there may be an emphasis on the one or the other of the various aspects. Thus one system may emphasise the nature of man, and another system may lay the emphasis on the nature of the Absolute; another may emphasise the nature of the world and still another may emphasise the relation of man to man. In the *Sāṅkhya-Yoga* combination, there is no doubt about the fact that the emphasis is on the nature of man. There is a dissatisfaction with one's relation to the world, and the way out of this dissatisfaction is through the realisation of the true nature of man himself *(Kaivalya)*, as free from association with the world outside. At first sight the *Nyāya-Vais'eṣika* combination may seem to emphasise the nature of the world outside, since there is an attempt at understanding the world outside in its true nature *(Padārthatattvajñāna)*. The *Nyāya system* tries to understand the world outside, which is the object of our knowing, through an analysis of the process of knowing; whatever is known through a correct process must be correctly known. Thus it starts with the means of knowing and the objects of knowledge. The various factors that are adverse to the correct process of knowing [1], which are obstacles to the process of correct knowing, are also dealt with. These are the sixteen categories of the *Nyāya* system. The *Vais'eṣika* system deals

[1] संशय (Doubt) etc.

with the objects of the external world directly for knowing them through a process of division and classification and definition, through understanding their similarities and dissimilarities (*Sādharmya* and *vaidharmya*). In both the systems, this correct knowing is only a means for some higher end of man, which is designated *Nis'sreyasa* (some transcendental bliss). At this stage, man, rather his self, becomes freed from all attributes, even the attribute of knowledge. The basic assumption must be that experience in any form is a kind of misery. There is very little difference between the *Sāṅkhya-Yoga* combination and the *Nyāya-Vais'eṣika* combination in their main outlook. In both there is a complete cessation of all experience of the world outside at the stage of the attainment of the goal. In the former the self in this pure state is of the nature of objectless experience, while in the latter there is no kind of experience at all, remaining. In the *Vedānta* there is the emphasis on the aspect of knowing the Absolute; especially is this the case with the *Advaita* School. In the other Schools of *Vedānta* also the object is to know *Brahman*; it may be to know *Brahman* as the "Whole"[1] or as the "Beyond",[2] in relation to the individual self and the world that have limitations and that are parts of the Absolute, or it may be the realisation of the Absolute as the "Supreme".[3] There is no system in India that lays the greatest emphasis on the nature of the world outside or on the relation of man to man.

It is in the *Mīmāṁsā* that I find a full and balanced philosophy. The fact is that in all the systems, in the *Sāṅkhya-Yoga*, in the *Nyāya-Vais'eṣika* and in the *Vedānta*, the appeal is essentially to those who are dissatisfied with their experience in this world. They are the philosophy of escape from life, escape from the world as a bondage; but in the

[1] *Aṁs'in.* [2] *S'eṣin.* [3] *Parama.*

Mīmāṁsā the appeal is to those who desire to know man and his life, life according to the moral law of the world. There is realism in it without materialism. The world is a reality; there is a perfect moral law of life in this real world; man too is real, with full capacity and full freedom to follow the perfect law of life, the perfect moral law in the world. If he does not follow the law, or if he attempts to follow a law in his own way, different from its own nature, he meets with the natural consequence. Men are equal before this moral law. There is no agency or power to reward those who follow the moral law or to punish those who go astray from that path. There is nothing that is Absolute in this Universe except the moral law; there is nothing perfect other than this moral law. Man never *came* into this world and man will never and can never *escape* from this world. The world never *came* into existence and it will never and can never *go* out of existence. There is the fullest spiritual eminence which does not degenerate into fatalism and there is full scope at the same time for "progress". There is no surrender to a superior, while there is obedience to law and order.

At first sight one may find it difficult to meet with anything that can be legitimately designated philosophy in the *Mīmāṁsā* system. It is generally taken as a work dealing essentially with ritualism. In recent times *Mīmāṁsā* has been neglected, and in all accounts of Indian philosophy, the *Mīmāṁsā* system is assigned only a very insignificant position. One finds only a meagre account of the system, and it is generally assumed that what should be called Indian philosophy is truly the *Vedānta*. The *Yoga* is more a practical science; the *Nyāya-Vais'eṣika* has become logic. *Sāṅkhya* is included in the *Vedānta*. *Mīmāṁsa* is ritualism. So the *Vedānta* remains as the true Indian philosophy.

If one compares the contents of the twelve chapters of the *Mīmāṁsā Sūtras*[1] with the subject matter contained in the four chapters of the *Vedānta Sūtras*,[2] one can find little of philosophy in the former while one can find nothing but philosophy in the latter. Thus it is no wonder that the *Mīmāṁsā* is assigned a position among the systems of philosophy in India only as a matter of courtesy and not as a matter of right. The *Nyāya-Vais'eṣika* lost its importance, because its metaphysics could not appeal to the thinking mind. Perhaps Udayanācārya's *Nyāyakusumāñjali* is the only work that has a lasting value in the *Nyāya-Vais'eṣika* system as philosophy, apart from the logic side. The metaphysics of *Yoga* is practically identical with the metaphysics of *Sāṅkhya*, and in all essentials, the metaphysics of *Sāṅkhya* and the metaphysics of *Vedānta* are not much different from each other.

As in the case of the metaphysics of the *Nyāya-Vais'eṣika* system, the ritualism of the Vedas, which is the subject-matter of the *Mīmāṁsā*, also had lost its hold on the thoughts of men. Indian ritualism had shifted from the Vedic sacrifices to the temple worship; and the temple worship finds no place in the *Mīmāṁsā* system. The new ritualism, namely, temple worship, went hand in hand with the monasteries (*Saṁnyāsi-matts*), which were centres of *Vedāntic* study all along. Along with this loss of hold on the mind of the people, the philosophical side of the *Mīmāṁsā* too lost its significance.

Yet *Mīmāṁsā* rests on one of the most sublime approaches to philosophy. There is a conception of the Universe

[1] Chapters: 1. Authority, 2. Distinction (of rites), 3. Subsidiaries, 4. Application, 5. Order, 6. Eligibility, 7. Transfers in general, 8. Transfers in particular, 9. Assumptions, 10. Sublation, 11. Double significance, 12. Context. They all refer to rituals.

[2] Chapters: 1. Harmony, 2. Non-contradiction, 3. Means 4. Fruit. They refer to determination and attainment of *Brahma*.

and of man and of their mutual relation that has risen far higher than any height which man's talents have been able to ascend in any realm of thought. The *Advaita Vedānta* is extolled as having risen to the highest heights of human thought; but really what is contained in the *Advaita Vedānta* is what has been attempted in various countries. My own reaction has been that the *Vedānta* has received thus much of attention because of its affinities and its similarities with the thoughts of other nations, and not because of its real uniqueness. And the *Mīmāṁsā* has failed to receive that much attention and the same amount of recognition, because it is so very different from anything that has been attempted in any other country.

The world is real; the world is ever; the moral law is an objective factor of this world that has never been created, and is independent of any God or of any Prophet. Man is perfectly free and all men are equal in this realm dominated by a perfect moral law. There is neither reward nor punishment. Man gets what he works for. There is no Church to arrest the progress of thought; there is nothing that is not an open question. Nothing is left for faith or blind belief. Here is a philosophy that can satisfy all needs of science and rationalism, that can at the same time satisfy all religious needs of moral life in this world. And yet there is no God, there is no Prophet, there is no Church, there is no Hierarchy. The nature of the world and the nature of man explain everything to the fullest satisfaction of our intellectual needs. Virtue is a positive factor and not negative in nature. Negative processes like abstinence and avoidance cannot result in true virtue, though such abstinence and avoidance may be contributory, but subordinate, factors in the development of the positive virtue. Just as a physical law can function only in the form

of a positive operation, and not simply by avoidances, similarly moral law too functions only through positive actions of a virtuous nature and not at all through the process of avoidances and abstinences of what are prohibited. These are aspects of philosophical thought that have never been attempted in any other country. Here is a religion without a God; here is a system of ritualism without a Church and a priestly hierarchy; here is a form of worship with no surrender; here is a system of moral law with no power to apply a sanction against those who go astray; here is a system of philosophy which admits no question of a beginning and end.

iv. God in the Mīmāṁsā

The Mīmāṁsā is the only religious system in the whole world where there is no God. To the extent that in *Mīmāṁsā*, the question of man and his relation to other men looms large, that is, the question of moral life among men, it has to be taken as a religion and not merely as a system of philosophy where the nature of the Absolute is considered. It is not meant that there is absolutely no scope for God in the *Mīmāṁsā* system; it is not all antitheistic. The position taken up by *Mīmāṁsā* is that in philosophy, questions must be decided on a rationalistic basis, and God is not an object that can be decided through a process of syllogistic reasoning. God is experienced and not proved by reasoning. What is merely experienced and cannot be proved cannot come into the picture in a philosophy, though there is no opposition to philosophy. To this extent too, *Mīmāṁsā* takes up more or less the same position as *Vedānta*. In the *Vedānta* also, God is not determined through syllogistic reasoning.

What *Mīmāṁsā* does not admit into the system is God syllogistically proved as Creator of the world with its moral order and as the Controller of that moral order. If it be a question of the Vedic Gods, *Mīmāṁsā* has no objection at all. If people believe in God, if they have the inner experience of God, they may worship such a God. But the world and the moral order in it are eternal and uncreated and they function by their own nature without any control from any being outside. What the *Mīmāṁsakas* are very particular about is that the moral law operates by its own nature and from within itself. This is a reaction against certain tendencies that developed in the country.

The Vedas speak of individuals who had seen the Path for the first time. Yama and the Sages called the Aṅgiras are mentioned as such. Yama was assigned a place in the Vedic Pantheon. But the Sages called Aṅgiras remained Sages and did not rise up to the level of Gods, though they too partook of the oblation at sacrifices. There were other individuals too like the Ṛbhus who, for their great deeds, attained to the position of gods. The Maruts were the sons of the Deity Rudra who were mortals in the beginning without a divine status, but who later became gods. But none of them were raised to any dominant position as the sole authority on moral law. The moral law, designated *Ṛta* in the Veda, continued to function; there were many gods, and there were many sages who could vision gods. There were the normal human beings. The system of worship to the gods continued. All on a sudden there came a new "Teacher" who for the first time in the world attained "enlightenment" and who set the wheel of *Dharma* (moral order) moving. Because he had seen the Truth, he should not be questioned, and he alone is the authority for moral law. Ultimately he was also

deified. It is this position assigned to a single individual, which is a complete break from the beginningless tradition of the country, that was opposed by the *Mīmāṁsā*. None of the sages known in the Vedas were accepted as omniscient; they were endowed with superior powers. But such Sages were many. There was no single individual who dominated over the whole humanity, to whom man had to surrender his freedom, whom man had to obey implicitly.

The temple-worship had also come into vogue. It is the "Grace of God" in temple-worship that elevates man and not man's own actions by themselves. Man surrenders himself to a god and man worships a god to please that god; and it is only through the mediation of such propitiation of the god that man can attain elevation and not as a direct fruit of his actions. This intermediary of divine propitiation for the realization of the fruits of man's actions is also objected to in the *Mīmāṁsā*. If gods are pleased with those who do their duty, but at the same time if man gets the fruits of his actions by virtue of such actions themselves, there is no surrender to gods on the part of man.

If worship as a good action depends on divine grace for bearing fruits, have the gods the freedom to award the fruits or to withhold the fruits or to award another fruit or to award greater or a lesser fruit? If they have, man does not get the fruits of his actions in virtue of his having performed a good action. If the propitiation of the gods and the consequent realization of the fruit come as a matter of course, gods become mere automatons without the essentials of intelligent beings, consisting of freedom of will. Thus if gods are intelligent beings, man has no freedom; man gets the fruits only as the gods are pleased to grant; if man gets his fruits by virtue of his own actions, gods are only automatons

and do not deserve to be worshipped. Thus according to *Mīmāṁsā*, man does good actions and gets the fruits. The propitiation of gods can bring about only a sort of subjective satisfaction to the doer and not come within the scope of philosophy. Neither the gods nor *the* God controls moral law; it operates by its own nature.

When I said that there is no God in the *Mīmāṁsā* I must make the point quite clear. What I meant is not that the system is absolutely anti-theistic. What I really had in mind is that there is no theology, no systematized doctrine of the nature and function of a God in the system. It can easily flourish in an environment of belief in and worship of God. And it was so flourishing. But the problem of God was not introduced into the system as an intergral part, except to show that the problem cannot be admitted. If the problem of God is once so introduced, there arise many difficulties and it may prejudicially affect the interest of a belief in and worship of God. With all the limitations of comparison, I may say that the system evolved in *Mīmāṁsā* is something like the system in a political State. God in *Mīmāṁsā* and God in other systems are like the Constitutional Head of a State who just reigns and the Autocratic Head of a State who interferes with the civic life of the people. Even in a State where there is a Constitutional Head, the people show respect to such a Head of the State; but they get what is their due not through the grace of the Head of the State, as is the case in a State with an autocratic Head, but in their own right as citizens; the pleasure or displeasure of the Head of the State has no effect on the life of the population. That is the spirit of the Indian people and that spirit is maintained on the religious plane only in the *Mīmāṁsā*.

Whether the world came out of the *Brahman* or whether it evolved from the Primeval Matter,[1] or whether it was created by God, no system of philosophy in India accepts an absolute beginning for the process of life in this world and to the world itself. No system of philosophy postulates a time and a stage when the world absolutely was not; no system postulates that on a particular day God created the world from the atoms or from himself, or that the world started on its course of evolution from the primal matter. The dynamic and changing nature of the world and the path towards progression are accepted in all systems of thought. All that some of the systems say is that if a beginning were postulated, then it is not at all a void from which the positive world came into being. If there is an ultimate end, then too that is not in the form of falling back into such a void. Life is a fundamental and positive factor in this world and this life is the root of the world of change, is the cause for the dynamic nature of the world. The end must be the reversion of life into its own nature before the change and progression started. This intermediate stage of dynamic activity and progression is accepted in the *Mīmāṁsā* also. Thus the question of a creation or evolution of the world has little value in Indian philosophy; all systems are interested only in its stage of dynamic activity and progression and in man's function and goal in such a world. In the question of creation or evolution, as introduced and discussed in certain systems of Indian philosophy there is a big "if"; if the world as experienced has come out of something else, that something is of such and such a nature. But the emphasis on eternity (*Anādi*) shows that all the systems ultimately accepted the *Mīmāṁsā* position that the world *is* and that it never *was not* and never

[1] मूलप्रकृति.

will not be. There can never be a world without its own moral order. Thus where is the God in any system who created the world and its moral order and controls the moral order?

The world has always been, is ever, and will ever remain in a state of dynamic activity and progression, and man too is a dynamic personality. Man is essentially free. The path of progression is within the nature of the law of the world. Freedom carries with it power and equality. A path of progression has no significance unless there is the power vested in the individual to proceed along that path without sanction from a superior being. There may be gradation among men. But there is no "superman". Gods may be on a higher level in this gradation, in relation to men. But gradation does not mean subordination and control. Veneration for those who are on the higher level, even worship of such beings on the part of those placed on a lower level, is not excluded. But philosophically, there is freedom, equality, and power for all. It is on this fundamental issue that there was conflict between the *Mīmāmsā* approach to the nature of the world and the *Mādhyamika* approach, which accepted a "void" and also a "superman".

Although philosophy is entirely a matter for the thinking people, for the wise people, the common people also react in a way to the findings of the philosophers, and they cannot be excluded from the consequences of their philosophy. That a particular person had the "enlightenment" is not a matter that can be rationalistically proved, and it requires faith. If faith in the eminence of a person becomes a fundamental, there arises a conflict between those who have such a faith and those who do not have it. Thus religion, instead of bringing humanity together, becomes an occasion for conflicts among the people. The direct and immediate sequel is that

there is inequality between those who accept the omniscience of such a person and those who do not accept it. A religion has no value unless that religion contains in itself the elements of unity, equality, freedom, and power; and such a religion becomes even a danger. That is why *Mīmāṁsā* accepted the moral law of the world as an integral factor of the world to which *all* are subordinate and which transcends all limitations arising from a human origin. The *Mīmāṁsā* attempted to interpret the nature of the world and of man for humanity in general and not merely for those who have faith in a particular person as the omniscient propounder of that law. Moral law is common to those who may follow a Teacher and those who follow another "Teacher, and also to those who follow no "Teacher". The *Mīmāṁsā* exposition of religion and moral order in this world is of such a universal nature.

v. A Slight Schism in Mīmāṁsā

Mīmāṁsā developed as the national philosophy of India. Owing to the new influences that began to work in the country, there was a slight fall in the national character, and the ancient views began to be too idealistic for the changed conditions. There was an attempt to slightly loosen the rigidity of the laws of life and there was a counter move to re-assert the ancient views. The reform is attributed to a great Teacher named Kumārila Bhaṭṭa and the orthodox view was re-affirmed by another Teacher named Prabhākara who is now accepted as a disciple of Kumārila Bhaṭṭa.

I need not go into the details regarding their relative chronology or their works. I content myself with the statement that the differences between the two schools called after the two Teachers were on details and not on the main

standpoint. The nature of the world and of man and their mutual relation, the nature of the moral law in this world and the statement of that law, the operation of that law, the authority of the statement of the law—on all such main points there was no wide difference between the two schools. As a matter of fact the nation was not divided into sections on the basis of any cardinal creed as was the case at a later stage with reference to the growth of the *Vedānta* philosophy or as was the case with Christianity that divided itself into the Roman Catholic and the Protestant Churches or as was the case with Islam which divided into the two sects of Shias and Sunnis. These latter were irreconcilable differences that divided nations into opposite camps. The essence of *Mīmāṁsā* was the unity of the moral law in this world and the total absence of any specific creed. The only difference was in regard to the adjustment of the laws of moral life to the changed conditions of the times. And *Mīmāṁsā* adjusted itself to the altered situation. The old and the new were again unified into a national culture without any schism, without any quarrel.

I give below some of the points on which there were differences between those who attempted a change and those who attempted at the conservatism of the old.

According to Prabhākara, the Vedas form the authority of the moral law and it is the Vedas that interpret this moral law; the purpose of the *Mīmāṁsā* is only to interpret the Vedas and not to interpret the moral law. Here Veda must be taken in the most universal sense, the statement of any moral law. Kumārila Bhaṭṭa held the view that the *Mīmāṁsā* interpreted the moral law. The difference is very slight indeed. Prabhākara wanted to see that the interpretations do not supersede the real texts of moral law.

Prabhākara says that the primary duty of teaching fell on the teacher and the study by the student is an accessory to it. We cannot leave the problem of study to the desire of the student for being taught. Kumārila Bhaṭṭa held the view that the desire of the disciples to study is enough to explain the process of study. The disciples get the guidance from the parents and the elders in various activities and similarly he gets guidance in engaging himself in study also from his parents and elders.

Prabhākara's doctrine is that the content of every action "thou shalt do" is some inscrutable fruit called *Apūrva* (what was not before), or something to be produced (*Kārya*) or a command (*Niyoga*). The injunction has reference to one who develops an inner urge that it is something that should be done (*Kāryatābodha*), or that one is being enjoined to do the act (*Niyojya*). Sometimes there is a fruit mentioned in connection with the injunctions and one gets the fruit by the performance of that act so enjoined. Sometimes there is no fruit at all and still one does the act because he has been enjoined to do it by the law. What prompts one to do the thing is simply the fact that one has been enjoined to do it in the law.

The doctrine of Kumārila Bhaṭṭa was that attached to every act there is a fruit. Sometimes a positive fruit like *Svarga* (pure bliss) is prescribed. Sometimes no fruit may be expressly stated; in such cases we assume a fruit from the context, from incidental statements or we assume *Svarga* as the fruit. Even in obligatory acts like the daily ablutions, there is the purification of the mind as a definite fruit. Where there is a positive fruit expressly prescribed or assumed, there is no sin attached to failure to perform it, while there is the fruit realized by performing it. In the

case of obligatory rites where no specific fruit is prescribed, there is sin attached to failure to do it, and there is the general fruit in the form of purification of the mind by performing it.

The content of an injunction according to Kumārila Bhaṭṭa is the "production"[1] or a realization that the action is productive of some beneficial fruit.[2] This term "production" has a technical sense. In every production there are three elements, namely, the means, the method, and the fruit.[3] In the case of an injunction in law, the knowledge that it is an injunction[4] as the means and the knowledge that it is a good act[5] as the method, produce in a person another "production." The former production rests in the injunction by law itself and not in any particular person, in so far as the statement of a law is not the statement of any person. In the resultant "production" the means and the method and the fruit are prescribed separately for each act. For example in a religious ceremony like a sacrifice, the sacrifice[6] is the means, the subsidiaries[7] in the performance of the sacrifice form the method and heaven (*Svarga*) is the fruit. This two-fold production respectively termed verbal[8] and objective,[9] with their respective means, method, and fruit is the content of an injunction. There is a later development that the content of an injunction is the fact that the act prescribed is the means for a desirable purpose.

There are statements of prohibitions in law. There are certain prohibitions where there is need for a deliberate abstention from doing what has been prohibited. But the nature of most of the prohibitions is that the mind shall

[1] भावना. [2] इष्टसाधनता. [3] करणं इतिकर्तव्यता फलं च.
[4] लिङादिज्ञान. [5] प्राशस्त्यज्ञान. [6] याग.
[7] अङ्ग. [8] शाब्दी. [9] आर्थी.

remain in a state of indifference in relation to what has been prohibited. Thus in the prohibition "one shall not drink alcohol" what is meant is not that one should make an effort to abstain from drinking alcohol, but that one's mind shall remain in a state of void without any thought of the thing that has been prohibited. The difference is this. In one the negative element is syntactically related to the root and in the other is related to the injunctive termination; in the first case, what is meant is that there shall be a volition towards the non-committal of the act that has been prohibited and in the second what is meant is that there shall be no volition towards the committal of the act. The latter is the general nature of a prohibition; but where the context requires a voluntary withdrawal of the mind from the act, it has to be taken in such a sense; but such cases are rare.

According to Kumārila Bhaṭṭa, there is no direct fruit from the observance of a prohibition, the mind being in a state of indifference; but by doing what is prohibited, there is an adverse result. That means that the act is a sin. According to Prabhākara, while there is no fruit from the observance of the prohibition, there is no evil fruit either from doing what has been prohibited. It does not mean that Prabhākara had no notion of a difference between sin and virtue. What it actually means is that sin consists in going against what has been enjoined in the Law. It is a very idealistic position to take up from the point of view of ethics, that sin is merely a matter of conscience and that the effect does not determine the nature of an act as sin or as virtue. Such a conception of ethical values cannot operate in a society unless that society is guided by certain idealistic standards, and along with some decline in such standards, a new conception of sin is entertained.

The real difference between the School of Kumārila Bhaṭṭa and that of Prabhākara lies in the nature of injunctions and of prohibitions. Arising out of this is the other point of the nature of " Import of propositions " (*S'ābdabodha*). Kumārila Bhaṭṭa accepts the usual view that every word conveys a full meaning and that such words put together give us what is termed a "judgment". It can be a statement of a fact; it can be a command of something to be observed (*Codanā*). This is what is called the *Abhihitānvayavāda* (the theory of words with full meanings brought together into syntactical relation).

To Prabhākara, the world is a dynamic, progressive, orderly fact; this is the essential nature of the world. There is nothing that is static; everything that appears to be an accomplished fact is in reality associated with movement and progression in an orderly way and it has a value and reality only in this way. Thus an isolated word or a bare statement of a so-called accomplished fact has no full meaning. They do not give us any complete idea. The mind remains in a state of suspense, and there can be a termination of this state of suspense (*Ākāṅkṣāvirati*) only when there is a statement of something enjoined to be done. Thus when one says "a cow", there is this need to know what one has to do with the cow. If the statement is " bring the cow " then there is the complete idea, in so far as the cow is associated with something that is to be done. The word " cow " has a meaning only as something associated with an act to be done. Its syntactical relation with a command is something that is inherent in the word. There is nothing like a bare word-meaning. There is only a sentence-meaning. And every word individually means what the whole sentence means. This is the *Anvitābhidhānavāda* (the theory of words

expressing a meaning only as syntactically related). This is a very ancient theory in Indian thought.

Yāska[1] attributes this theory to Audumbarāyaṇa. He says that what is constant in the mind[2] is only the sentence,[3] and as such the division of words into nouns etc. does not stand to reason.[4] Yāska accepts this position; but he says that for practical purposes[5] such an artificial division of a sentence into words and the classification of words in grammar[6] are necessary for brevity.[7] Otherwise there will be no end[8] to the study of the science of grammar. Bhartṛhari too accepts this portion in his *Vākyapadīya.*[9] The theory of *Vākyasphoṭa* also presumes the acceptance of this position. The statement under "*Laghu*" in the *Mahābhāṣya* among the purposes of grammar clearly shows that divisions and classifications of words are accepted only for practical purposes and may not be true representation of the nature of words.

The theory mentioned by Yāska, as held by the *Nairuktas*, that all nouns are derived from verbs[10] also has this doctrine as the basis. A noun has "being" as its chief element in its sense;[11] a "being" in itself cannot give rise to a knowledge without a "becoming", which latter is the chief element in the sense of a verb.[12] Thus every "being" ultimately

[1] Nirukta—I·1. [2] इन्द्रियनित्य. [3] वचन. [4] चतुष्ट्वं नोपपद्यते.
[5] व्यवहारार्थम्. [6] शब्देन संज्ञाकरणम्. [7] अणीयस्त्वात्. [8] व्याप्तिमत्त्वात्.

[9] वाक्यस्य बुद्धौ नित्यत्वमर्थयोगं च लौकिकम्।
दृष्ट्वा चतुष्ट्वं नास्तीति वार्ताक्षौदुम्बरायणौ ॥
व्याप्तिमांश्च लघुश्चैव व्यवहारः पदाश्रयः।
लोके शास्त्रे च कार्यार्थं विभागेनैव कल्पितः ॥ II. 347, 348.

[10] नामान्याख्यातजानीति शाकटायनो नैरुक्तसमयश्च—I·12.

[11] सत्त्वप्रधानानि नामानि I·1.

[12] भावप्रधानमाख्यातम् I·1.

goes back on a "becoming" for being understood. Prabhākara is really expounding an ancient theory.

From the doctrine of the dynamic and progressive nature of the world, there arises another theory that human functions are essentially right. Man is good and the world is governed by a perfect moral law. So man's natural function must be good, and it requires no proof. Knowing is one such function, and as such, knowledge is in itself a right knowledge too. Man's knowledge can be an error only if it can be shown that it has not taken the right course, that it has deviated from that course. This is what is called the self-validity of knowledge (*Svataḥprāmāṇya*).

Prabhākara accepts this position; but he goes a step further and asserts that there is nothing called an error. There is no omniscient being in this world. Man's knowledge has some imperfection. What are called valid knowledge and invalid knowledge are only gradations in the imperfection of knowledge. It is knowledge all the same. A knowledge manifests itself along with the object (a subject and predicate) and the agent of the knowledge.[1] When a thing is mistaken for another, there is the knowledge of the thing, and the element of the thing for which it is assumed to be mistaken is an aspect of recollection. The distinction of valid and invalid knowledge has reference to the knowledge of what was not previously known; a recollection is only a reproduction of the knowledge of what was known and is not what is technically called a "valid knowledge". When the thing is known as what it is, then there is the knowledge of the subject and the predicate, while in what is called an error, there is only the knowledge of the subject while the predicate element is a recollection. What is called an invalid knowledge or error is

[1] ज्ञान-ज्ञेय-ज्ञातृ.

only what does not have the predicate element in it. Experience is always valid experience; this is the extreme of realism.

Prabhākara's doctrine of sin is only an extension of this theory of experience being in itself valid. There is a beneficial fruit in the performance of what has been enjoined; there are certain actions that are enjoined, but that have no fruit, and their performance is their reward. There are certain actions that are prohibited; if they are performed, then what is called sin is just that what has been prohibited has been performed. It is only an imperfection in function within the frame-work of the moral order in the world.

The perfect nature of the moral order in the world, according to Prabhākara, has resulted in the nature of the inference also. The relation of cause and effect is so very tight and intimate that in every event there is this causal relation, and one has to determine the causal relation from the nature of the event. It is not the number of cases of co-existence that determines the "Universal" but the nature of the events that are investigated. It is possible to determine such a causal relation even from a single instance.

The uncompromising realism of Prabhākara is the basis for another doctrine that there is no "non-existence".[1] There is only a positive world with active functions in it. There is no void and there is no stagnation. Kumārila Bhaṭṭa accepts a reality called "non-existence" though he identifies it with its substrate,[2] which is positive in nature. If a thing had been there it would have been seen there[3]; since it has not been seen, it is not there. This is the nature of the cognition of "non-existence" according to Kumārila Bhaṭṭa. Kumārila

[1] अभाव.

[2] अधिकरणात्मक.

[3] यदि स्यादुपलभ्येत.

Bhaṭṭa recognizes our experience about the absence of something, though he asserts that the absence is only of the nature of the substrate of that absence. Prabhākara does not recognize that there is a cognition of what is not there; there is nothing cognized and there is no need for recognizing a means of cognition (*Pramāṇa*).

There are various other points on which there is a difference between the two schools. Most of them relate to the interpretation of scriptural passages and to the performance of rites. They are not of much interest in the present context. It is not possible to assert that the one or the other is true to the original doctrines of the system. Each interprets his own views. One great difference is that Kumārila Bhaṭṭa is more practical in his approach, while Prabhākara is more idealistic. To Kumārila Bhaṭṭa the practical needs and the actual experiences of man must govern, at least temper, the operation of the moral law. But to Prabhākara the law is supreme and man even dwindles into an automaton before this law. Man conforms to the nature of the law only as a result of an inner urge, and his practical needs have no place.

vi. Mīmāṁsā as the Planning of a National Life

The works of S'abarasvāmin, Kumārila Bhaṭṭa, and Prabhākara show what the intellect of man is capable of and how they have exemplified the capacity of human intellect to an extent attained by few literary specimens in the world. The practical wisdom, the width of knowledge, the profoundity of thought, and the fidelity to truth found in their works mark them out from the rest of the literary wealth of the world. S'abarasvāmin's Bhāṣya can serve as a sourcebook for collecting an anthology of wise sayings covering a full volume. In this respect perhaps the Mahābhāṣya of

Patañjali is the only other work that can approach this great literary heritage to the modern world.

The fidelity to truth and the consequent courage to face facts found in the *Mīmāṁsā* is unparalleled in the history of thought either in India or in any other country. While the *Sāṅkhya* is also a rationalistic philosophy, the *Mīmāṁsā* has a religious touch too, in so far as it deals primarily with Moral Law (*Dharma*); and here is a religion based on man and his powers without any interference from a God. But it is not at all a materialistic system. Although the position taken up in the *Mīmāṁsā* and in the *Sāṅkhya* are more or less similar, the greatness of *Mīmāṁsā* lies in this that it is a religion, where moral Law is supreme without some one to create it or to operate it. Man is free to operate it and man operates it according to his capacities, taking upon himself the full consequences of his actions.

Kumārila Bhaṭṭa's interpretation of what is meant by the ceremonial "Bath"[1] on the termination of study at the household of the teacher is an instance of fidelty to truth without any compromise. He says that what is meant by "Bath" is not a return to the home, but only a certain relaxation of the rigidities of life like abstinence from drinking alcohol and eating meat;[2] and this is for Brahmins! Kumārila Bhaṭṭa also refers to the conduct of S'rī Kṛṣṇa which often is not acceptable to the strict moral law;[3] he never evades the question, nor does he try to find refuge in mystic and symbolic interpretations.

The two questions[4] raised in *Mīmāṁsā*, whether the chieftains of the hunters in the forests and the carpenters who

[1] स्नान. [2] मधुमांसाद्यवर्जन—I-1-107.

[3] In Tantravārtika—I-2-1.

[4] About निषादस्थपति and रथकार (VI-1-12 and 13).

make chariots can study the sacred Vedas in so far as they too have to perform certain Vedic rites prescribed for them, are equally significant in this connection. The reply is quite bold. If anything is prescribed for them, they must perform such rites and they must study the Vedas necessary for such performance. The *Mīmāṁsā* does not distort the text; they do not indulge in self-deception by putting any strained interpretation on the text.

It is also said in *Mīmāṁsā* that if in the activities of even recognized leaders of thought there is any ground for suspecting that personal motives and results of human weaknesses like avarice play a part, such actions are no guidance for *Dharma*. This is considered in connection with the disposal of a cloth used in a certain ceremonial.[1] The fact of the cloth being taken by a certain person need not form a part of the performance of the rite; it can be only a custom resulting from the avarice of a certain individual.

It is true that *Mīmāṁsā* deals only with Vedic rites. The fact is that this is just the point which was being questioned at that time. So far as ordinary conceptions of virtuous life are concerned, there was no difference of opinion among the people. The question arose only in relation to the Vedic rites which were being performed from the earliest times in the country, whether they form part of *Dharma*. The leaders of thought at that time established that the traditional rites also formed a part of *Dharma*. They never contended that such rites formed the entire *Dharma*.

In the course of dealing with this subject, they had to discuss the problems of man and of the world and of their mutual relation. They had also to enunciate the fundamental rules for interpreting texts. Besides the philosophy contained

[1] I-3-3.

in the *Mīmāṁsā*, these rules of interpretation form one of the most valuable contributions of *Mīmāṁsā* to thought. These rules were primarily framed to show that even when tested by the strictest rules, the texts of the available Vedas present a consistent system of moral codes so far as the religious rites are concerned; there is no occasion to suspect the association of inefficient and fraudulent hands in the Vedic texts. Along with the examination of the Vedic texts in the light of such strict rules of interpretation, the *Mīmāṁsā* takes a wider view and enters into a consideration of the nature of the world in which such rites are being performed and the nature of man who performs such rites. It is mainly the moral problems that stand foremost in the *Mīmāṁsā*. The world being accepted as a reality, without a primary "whence" and an ultimate "whither", many metaphysical problems fade into the background in this system. The question of the body and the relation of the body to the self has not been fully discussed in this system as it has been in the *Sāṅkhya* or in the *Vedānta* systems.

But there is one fundamental problem that has received attention in this system: man progresses only when he is in this body. Between two lives there is only reaping the fruits of man's actions during life; there is no progression at that time. This interval between two lives and the state of the self during that interval, called *Svarga*, is not the real thing in this system; what is vital is the condition of the self "during" life. Thus, the body which in many other systems is considered as the symbol of sin and of suffering, becomes in this system the best means of true progress for the self.

All these points developed in the *Mīmāṁsā* reflect the new environments that had come about in the country, against which it is that the *Mīmāṁsā* started a vigorous compaign. When man was free to have his own views, there were only

differences among men; there was nothing that could be called a schism. When an individual becomes the authority in questions of moral life, one has to decide what the teaching of that individual is; and here the personal factor of the disciples and of the exponents of the true meaning comes in. The result is that conflicting schools arise. But when there is only a moral law which could be known by persons according to their capacities, but which no one has known in its entirety and no one could know it also in its perfection, differences become an integral factor admitted into religion; such differences do not deteriorate into conflicts. If the Teacher who has given the law is omniscient, then the teaching too has necessarily to be accepted as perfect, and interpretations become necessary for those with imperfect capacities; the different interpretations given by those who are supposed to have received the perfect teaching direct from the Omniscient Teacher become, each one of them, the true interpretation. The consequence is that such differences become conflicts.

According to *Mīmāṁsā*, the statement of the moral law should be valid on account of its correspondence with the true nature of the law and not on account of its association with an individual. The elimination of defects should be the guiding principle in ascertaining the validity of the statement. If no defect could be detected, then the statement is accepted as corresponding to facts. The statement becomes the centre, and defects which form the circumference and a limitation, are removed. Association with a person is in itself a possible defect, and as such, the association with a person becomes a sort of circumference. The next step is that the truth is only within that circumference, and truth in this way becomes circumscribed. The result is that conformity to moral law and virtues in life are confined to those who are admitted into

that circle. Apart from the possible schisms within the circle, there is the possibility of conflict between those within and those outside the circle.

It is to avoid all such dangers to harmony among the people that the *Mīmāṁsā* developed the doctrine of the statement of law deriving its validity from within, what can come from outside being only defects in the statement and consequent invalidity. The Buddhistic view is that a statement in itself is invalid, and that its validity comes from outside, from its association with a reliable person. The test becomes, "who said so?" and not "what is it that has been said?" But the *Mīmāṁsa* position is that the test should be, "what is it that has been said" and not "who said so?"

It has been often said in recent times that on account of the spread of the new point of view about moral law, the Vedic school was losing ground and its hold on the people, and that the doctrine of the super-human origination of the Vedas was propounded to re-attract the people into their fold. But the fidelity to truth and courage to face facts is so prominent in the literature relating to the Vedic school, that such a theory cannot be reconciled with their true nature. There could have been neither a personal motive nor an element of fear.

An organized school has necessarily to promulgate a theory that those who are within are the "chosen", and also that it is only the "chosen" that will be directed towards into the school by the wise ones who are the "high guardians" of the school. There is no test to determine whether they are the really "chosen". The ineligibles freely come in and thus the school becomes corrupt. That is why *Mīmāṁsā* insisted on having a religion of "Law" as against a religion of a "Law-Giver".

Further true virtue must be in the form of positive actions and not in the nature of mere abstinences. It is impossible to determine whether there is true abstinence; it is possible to make a show of such an abstinence. But no one can make a mere show of virtuous actions of a positive nature. It is easy to detect whether there has been a positive action or not, from the presence or absence of the result. Further even when there is a physical abstinence, there may not be a mental abstinence. Mental attachment is as much a sin as a physical action. A volition to abstain from sin necessarily admits the element of sin into the mental activity and that is what is termed "mental sin". Sin is physical (*Kāyika*), verbal (*Vācika*) or mental (*Mānasika*). Real abstinence from sin can come only if the mind is so engaged in virtuous activities that sin finds no place in its functions. Or there must be complete detachment of the mind through tranquillity (*S'ama*) etc. This is only in the select few and not in the people. Retirement from the world (*Nivṛtti-mārga*) in the case of the eligible few is not against the principles of *Mīmāṁsā*; what *Mīmāṁsā* is particular about is that religion, which is for the people, must be of the nature of positive virtuous activities (*Pravṛtti-mārga*).

Further, law can function only if there is respect for law, only if there is faith in law. This may be in the nature of an absolute and implicit faith in law as taught by Prabhākara; it may be faith in law as conducive to happiness and progress, as taught by Kumārila Bhaṭṭa. If fear of the consequence of sin is taken as what contributes to the proper functioning of law, there is the danger of people resorting to enjoy the advantages of sinful actions, though temporary, in preference to the avoidance of the future danger that may arise through acting sinfully. If advantages of acting according to law is

what prompts one to act according to law, there is a greater chance of law functioning efficiently. Prabhākara even eliminated the point of sin from the affairs of the world except as a sort of prick in the conscience that one has not acted according to law, without any positive adverse effect.

Faith in law in its true sense can develop only if there are the necessary factors attending on the concept of law, like freedom, equality, and power. They bring with them, in the chain, qualities like tolerance and sympathy. Notions of equality and freedom cannot be developed in the restricted confines of a rigid school ; they grow only in the free expanses of the open world. It is only where there are developed these qualities of freedom and equality in the life of the nation that the leaders would be willing to leave every point open for discussion, without fear, without reservation. Truth can be arrived at only when all possible doubts have been removed, and in such removal of all possible doubts the views of those who hold opposite views form the best help. Even the wisest may not know all the doubts that are possible against his own position. In such an atmosphere, all questions are left open for free discussion and the disputants are prepared to faithfully accept and follow up whatever conclusions have been arrived at after such an open discussion. The power of the individual to act or not to act or to act in his own way is another factor that is needed for his faith in law. And this power is one of the cardinal principles of *Mīmāṁsā*. An injunction has no validity in *Mīmāṁsā* unless there is the necessary power attached to it.

The leaders of thought in India knew of the age-long civilization of India which depended on such freedom and equality enjoyed by men without the limitations of individuals and their Churches. They knew also that the continuance of

the civilization depended on restoring that sense of freedom and equality to men. If there has been religious tolerence in India, if there had been in India a warm sympathy towards the aspirations of all peoples following different " Paths ", it is the contribution of *Mīmāṁsā*. If there has been a decadence it is due to the fall from the *Mīmāṁsā* ideals. *Mīmāṁsā* has not been understood in modern times; it has been grossly misunderstood. It is hoped that there would be a revival and that the philosophy of man developed in the *Mīmāṁsā* system will be studied with greater attention and warmer sympathy.

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